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REMARKS

Reconsideration and further examination is respectfully requested. Claims 2,3, 23, 30,31, 35-45 and 47 have been cancelled. Claims 1, 4-22, 24-29, 32-34, 46 and 48-53 are currently pending herein.

Claims 1, 2, 8-14, 22 29, 30, 35, 36 and 46 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Tounai et al. Claims 15-21 and 37-45 were allowed. Claims 3-7, 23-28, 31-34 and 47-53 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

In order to expedite allowance of this application, and not by way of agreement with the characterizations of the claims with regard to Tounai, Applicant's have amended independent claims of the invention to include limitations deemed patentable by the Examiner. For example, claim 1 has been amended to include the limitation of claim 3. Claim 22 has been amended to include the limitation of claim 23. Claim 29 has been amended to include the limitation of claim 31, and claim 46 has been amended to include the limitation of claim 47. Claims 35-45 have been canceled.

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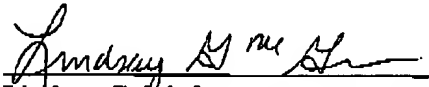
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Applicants have made a diligent effort to place the claims in condition for allowance. However, should there remain unresolved issues that require adverse action, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone Lindsay G. McGuinness, Applicants' Attorney at 978-264-6664 so that such issues may be resolved as expeditiously as possible.

For these reasons, and in view of the above amendments, this application is now considered to be in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,

7/15/2004
Date


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